

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 8-11 and 13-15 are pending in the application, with claim 8 being the sole independent claim. By this amendment, claim 12 has been cancelled, and claim 8 has been amended. Support for the above amendment to claim 8 can be found in the application, as originally filed. No new matter has been added.

Applicant notes that claim 12 has been indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Applicant has amended claim 8 to include the features of claim 12, and consequently claim 8 is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

The Office Action entered rejections of claims 8-11 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, alleging those claims to be unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent No. 4,727,805 (Pichler et al) and U.S. Patent No. 6,280,208 (Masuda et al.). As discussed above, claim 8 is seen to be in condition for allowance and the remaining claims depend therefrom. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice to or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejection, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance. In particular, it is Applicant's current intention to file a divisional application, to pursue the subject matter of the previously rejected claims.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Didas", is written over a horizontal line.

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